Characteristics of High Performance Teams
By Terence Traut

Participative Leadership

- Envisioning leadership and organizing leadership
- Clear leadership role that is shared
- Enables people to make choices
- Shared norms
- Shared values
- Members drawn to the team
- Team identity
- Belonging/membership
- Synergism
- Future focused

Responsive

- Unite/partner with other teams
- Flexible
- Outward focused
- Focus on the customer
- Allows risks and mistakes
- Promotes group learning
- Self-Monitoring and self-correcting: evaluates its own performance
- Individuals pleased with work results
- Assigns opposing views.

Aligned on Purpose and Vision

- Common shared purpose
- Clear shared vision
- Self-directing
- High morale
- Team goals align with personal goals and organization goals
- Problem solving, not laying blame
- Clear, shared understanding of team members' roles

Task Focused

- Challenging tasks
- Individual accountability/ownership
- Equality in workload
- Quality focus
- Clear tasks and milestones
- Mutual respect for ability
- Commitment

Shared Responsibility

- Shared decision making
- Rewards linked to team performance
- Recognize expertise/value added in individuals
- Cooperation
- Clear standards of acceptable performance
- Celebrates success
- Clear authority and responsibility
- Contribution
- Members responsible for team success

Communicative

- Superb communication
- Open communication
- Openness
- Clear communication channels
- Share common language and terminology
- External communications
- Time managed well
- Structure, purposeful meetings (facilitator, timekeeper, recorder, scribe)

Problem Solving

- Upfront and direct: confronts issues not people
- Trust
- Clear decision-making process
- Conflicts managed well
- Freedom to express ideas
- Freedom to share opinions

Innovative

- Creative talents
- May promote personal relationships
- Respect for individuals
- Empowered and empowering

Source: http://140.129.140.51/eng/modules/tinyd3/content/C1/p6.htm

Teamwork: The Basics

1. Complementary skills

2. Established goals and accountability

3. Common approach

4. Common purpose

Add These Three Supplements...

- Shared beliefs

- A storehouse of credibility and trust

- Shared space

Source: Ivey Business Journal, May 2000 v64 i5 ps20. RICHARD RENSON-ARMER

How to Maintain Your Team

- Build a positive reputation by:
  - Reinforce reliability
  - Celebrate accomplishments
  - Develop skills & competence

- Limit personal biases

- Take time to get to know others

- Explicitly acknowledge personal differences

- Discuss cultural expectations

- Demonstrate care & concern for all

Source: Ivey Business Journal, May 2000 v64 i5 ps20 RICHARD BENSON-ARMER

Successful Team Leadership: Built on Trust

Team Leaders' Actions That Build Trust:

- Reduce uncertainty in the organizational context

- Clarify formal and informal rules

- Craft and communicate shared values

- Limit vulnerability in the situation

- Limit the risk of failure; celebrate and learn from well-intentioned mistakes

- Disaggregate problems into small, discrete elements

- Believe in the individual

Source: Ivey Business Journal, May 2000 v64 i5 ps20 *RICHARD RENSON-ARMER*

Bad Habits of Typically Successful People

When faced with new challenges and a possible high level of team conflict, what do team members do?

Typically, they revert to the old bad habits. Here are some examples of typical mistakes:

1. Fail to check with other team members before making commitments on their behalf.

2. Move forward too quickly without gathering or sharing enough information.

3. Involve other team members too late in the process.

4. Communicate in disrespectful ways.

5. Give unclear instructions or incomplete data to fellow team members.

Source: Training & Development. April 1999 v53 i4 p32(6), Paul Hennessey

Delegation - Getting the Help You Need, When You Need It

Use This Process When You Delegate Work:

1. Decide what to delegate

2. Find the right person to delegate to

3. Explain the purpose of the job, what & when you expect

4. Let the delegated person get on with the job and review work at appropriate checkpoints

5. Only accept good quality work

6. If appropriate, reward the effort

Source: Big Rivers Group, LLC, http://fewstcloud.org/userfiles/18%20Delegation%20Steps.pdf

The Nature of Problems

A problem is an obstacle which makes it difficult to achieve a desired goal, objective or purpose. It refers to a situation, condition, or issue that is yet unresolved. In a broad sense, a problem exists when an individual becomes aware of a significant difference between what actually is and what is desired.

1. First, you have to understand the problem.

2. After understanding, then make a plan.

3. Carry out the plan.

4. Look back on your work. How could it be better?

If you cannot solve the proposed problem, try to solve first some related problem. Could you imagine a more accessible related problem?

Source: Pólya, George (1945). *How to Solve It*. Princeton University Press. ISBN 0-691-08097-6.

Accountability Triggers Results

By: Lois J. Zachary Ed.D.

Accountability encompasses effort, energy, and efficiency; it is the key driver for organizational learning, performance, design, and behavior. Everyone needs to embrace the same definition of accountability in order to assure results.

1. Set Goals
2. Clarify Expectations
3. Define Roles and Responsibilities
4. Monitor Progress and Measure Results
5. Gather Feedback
6. Formulate Action Goals
7. Integrate Process Improvement

Source: http://www.asaecenter.org/PublicationsResources/EUArticle.cfm?ItemNumber=11778

Team Roles

What roles are available will depend much on the project and the goals of your team.

When determining team roles, it is important that:

1. **Everyone agrees on appropriate roles** - This may take some negotiation to decide.
2. **Everyone is satisfied in their roles** - Individuals must feel a sense of satisfaction in order for the team to function. Fortunately, teams will typically have people with different temperaments and skills who will want different roles. In addition, your team may want to **rotate roles** throughout the Housing Institute.

Flexibility

Whatever role you may have, it is still important that the **entire team** provide input **on every facet** of the project.

Team Leader - Typically responsible for setting a base agenda, facilitating meetings, and monitoring progress by communicating with members as needed.

Initiator - Someone who suggests new ideas. One or more people can have this role at a time.

Recorder - This person records whatever ideas a team member may have. It is important that this person quote a team member accurately and not "edit" or evaluate them.

Devil's Advocate/Skeptic - This is someone whose responsibility is to look for potential flaws in an idea.

Optimist - This is someone who tries to maintain a positive frame of mind and facilitates the search for solutions.

Timekeeper - Someone who tracks time spent on each portion of the meeting.

Gate Keeper - This person works to ensure that each member gives input on an issue. One strategy to do this is to ask everyone to voice their opinion one at a time. Another is to cast votes.

Summarizer - Someone who summarizes a list of options.

Source: **Penn State University,** http://archive.tlt.psu.edu/suggestions/teams/student/roles.html